

**THE PARISH OF TIDENHAM
&
ST BRIAVELS & HEWELSFIELD**

**A LENTEN PILGRIMAGE
AT HOME**



BOOK ONE DAYS 1 - 20



**THE PARISH OF TIDENHAM &
ST BRIAVELS & HEWELSFIELD
INVITE YOU TO JOIN ...**

A LENTEN PILGRIMAGE AT HOME

INTRODUCTION

When Jesus taught about God's love and his kingdom values he often used everyday objects his audience would have known well: salt, lamps, sheep, a lost coin, a cup of cold water.

As we seek to notice God more in our lives 24/7, we discover that our everyday objects still have lots to tell us about his love and his purposes for us. He calls us from one week's end to the other... and all through the week in between.

So, let's follow him through our own homes, noticing him as we journey on our pilgrimage through ordinary things together. Let's look, listen and learn.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOKLET

Find a quiet, comfortable place at a convenient moment of your day when you are unlikely to be disturbed. You'll need to set aside only fifteen minutes each day, (of course, you may take as long as you like!)

Key verses are selected for you and printed in your booklet, but you may like to have your Bible to hand to read around the verses, and understand their context and how they fit in the whole passage.

You may also like to keep a note each day of what God is nudging you to learn or what action you will take or what gladdens your heart. The wealth of God's lessons over the next forty days will be amazing.

A LENTEN PRAYER

Dear God

During these forty days of Lent,
strengthen our resolve each day,
to pray (upward), to search our hearts (inward)
and to give to others (outward).

Help us deepen our love, knowledge and
understanding of you, your word and your works
so that we may grow in your love
and be a light for others.

Amen

ASH WEDNESDAY

DAY 1, WEDNESDAY DIARY OR CALENDAR

*He appeared to them over a period of forty days
and spoke about the kingdom of God.*

Acts 1:3

My times are in your hands.

Psalms 31:15

TAKE A MOMENT

Hold your diary or look at your calendar. See what forty days looks like on paper then think what it feels like to live through forty days. It's a good chunk of time!

The Bible is clear that God considers 40 days a spiritually significant time period. Whenever God wanted to prepare someone for his purposes, he took 40 days -

Noah's life was transformed by 40 days of rain.

Moses was transformed by 40 days on Mount Sinai.

David was transformed by Goliath's 40-day challenge.

Elijah was transformed when God gave him 40 days of strength from a single meal.

The city of Nineveh was transformed when God gave the people 40 days to change.

The disciples were transformed by 40 days with Jesus after his resurrection.

Jesus was empowered by 40 days in the wilderness.

Let's use the forty days of Lent to be transformed, to renew our relationship with God, and allow him to become even more a part of our daily lives. This may also be an opportunity to give up some unhelpful habits (physical, emotional or spiritual) that have crept up on us, especially through lockdown days, weeks and months. We can't do it on our own: we need God's help, each day, every day.

RESPONDING

We pray: Lord, help me to let go of the things that are keeping me from building a closer relationship with you. Help me to use these forty days wisely to renew my bond with you so that I too maybe transformed by your loving presence with me. For your glory! Amen

BEDROOM

DAY 2, THURSDAY CURTAINS OR BLINDS

Whenever folk turn to face God as Moses did, God removes the veil and there they are—face-to-face! They suddenly recognize that God is a living, personal presence, not a piece of chiselled stone. And when God is personally present, a living Spirit, that old, constricting legislation is

recognized as obsolete. We're free of it! All of us! Nothing between us and God, our faces shining with the brightness of his face. And so we are transfigured much like the Messiah, our lives gradually becoming brighter and more beautiful as God enters our lives and we become like him.

2 Corinthians 3:16–18, The Message

TAKE A MOMENT:

Open your blinds or curtains to the new day. Look out and take time to notice what is happening in the world outside. What is the weather doing? Is anybody out there? Are there birds singing, cats prowling, buds growing?

Outside is a world of daily change, growth, activity and renewal, and God is with us in every moment.

RESPONDING

Inward/Outward/Upward: As we begin our Lenten pilgrimage, let's pray that the curtains/blinds of our hearts and minds will be opened up to allow us new views, new understanding of God's call on our everyday lives. And let's include others in this prayer too! Praise the Lord for all he is and does.



DAY 3, FRIDAY WARDROBE

*As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved,
clothe yourselves with compassion,
kindness, humility, meekness, and patience.*

Colossians 3:12

TAKE A MOMENT:

Open your wardrobe and look at your clothes. Think about what it means to be 'clothed with Christ'. We often talk about 'being like Jesus', so if we dress in his attributes (his compassion for others, his unfailing kindness, the sort of humility that Jesus showed when he laid aside his power to come and live with us, the meekness that was obedient even to the cross, the patience, forbearance and tolerance that he shows each and every one of us) then we will truly be like him.

RESPONDING

Inward: What 'holy clothes' will I wear today?

Upward: Take time to voice your praises for all Jesus was and is.

Outward: How can I live up to my 'holy clothes' in my actions from now on?

DAY 4, SATURDAY MIRRORS

You are precious to me. I give you honour, and I love you.

Isaiah 43:4 (ICB)

TAKE A MOMENT:

Look in the mirror. What do you see? What do you feel when you look at yourself? Now re-read the verse from Isaiah above, three or four times aloud. You are telling yourself an important truth you need to lodge in your heart and mind.

Upward: Thank God for His love.

Inward: Revel in the fact that you are precious to him.

Outward: Pray for those who struggle to see themselves as God's beloved child.

DAY 5, SUNDAY KEEPSAKES (things we treasure for remembrance)

*I will comfort those that mourn,
bringing words of praise to their lips.*

Isaiah 57:19

See, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands.

Isaiah 19:16

TAKE A MOMENT

Some things we keep are very precious because they link us to someone we have loved and who is no longer with us. It can even be something passed down through the family from generation to generation. Hold the object now, if you can. Picture the person/ people it brings back to your memory. Does it bring good memories that are stronger than the feelings of loss? If I lost this memento, would I still be able to remember? Isn't it wonderful to know that God will never, ever forget us?

RESPONDING

Inward: As precious as this object is to me, the person or time it reminds me of is of much more worth. I am amazed and humbled that I am so precious to the Lord. Take time to be amazed anew.

Upward: Spend some moments praising God for his faithfulness or pray this prayer:

Lord, help me keep memories of my loved ones close to my heart, knowing that they are at peace, safe in your arms. I have no need to fear I will forget them for they are always with me. I know too, that you are always with me and that your love encompasses all. Amen

Outward: How can I create a special memory for somebody today? What can I do to make somebody smile?

DAY 6, MONDAY HAIR BRUSH

And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered.

Matthew 10:30

TAKE A MOMENT

Brush your own or someone else's hair or a pet's hair. As you brush recall that God knows everything about you... nothing is hidden from him, and that nothing we can do or be, will ever stop him loving us.

RESPONDING

Inward: Take a moment to revel in God's love for you.

Upward: Praise him for his wonderful knowledge.

Outward: Share this with someone else!



DAY 7, TUESDAY JEWELLERY

The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field.

Matthew 13:44

TAKE A MOMENT

Have you a ring, bracelet, earrings or wristwatch that you wear every day? Why? Because, perhaps it's important (wedding ring), or you depend on it (watch) or you just treasure it because it's beautiful. Look at it now: it's yours, your very own and you may have had it for a long time so it's extra precious. Do we realise that we have treasure every day: the presence of the Lord with us wherever we go, whatever we do, however we feel?

RESPONDING

Inward: Treasure the Lord for a few moments...hold him close.

Upward: Praise the Lord, using all the names for him you can think of (Creator, Good Shepherd, King of Kings, Almighty One, Prince of Peace, Saviour etc.)

Outward: Tell somebody today how much you treasure their friendship.

BATHROOM

DAY 8, WEDNESDAY TURNING ON A TAP

Jesus said, 'If anyone believes in me, rivers of living water will flow out from that person's heart, as Scripture says.'

John 7:38

TAKE A MOMENT

The bathroom is where we brush our teeth and wash ourselves. Today, every time we turn on a tap, let's thank God for the gift of clean water and praise Him for the wonder of plumbing that brings that water so effectively into our homes. As we listen to the gurgle and splash of the water from our taps, let's think about the river of living water that can flow from our hearts because the source is the never-ending flood of God's love.

RESPONDING

Inward: Be aware of God's love flowing from his heart through yours.

Upward: Spend time in praise and thanksgiving.

Outward: Pray for those who do not have easy access to clean water and maybe take action by finding out about or giving to a charity engaged in helping the poorest and thirstiest, eg:

Water Aid, Tear Fund, Habitat for Humanity. Practical giving will flow from our heartfelt prayer.

DAY 9, THURSDAY THE TOILET

Therefore, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us.

Hebrews 12:1

But those who were at the table with him began to say among themselves, 'Who is this who even forgives sins?'

Luke 7:49

TAKE A MOMENT

It's easy to think this is an embarrassing thing, a loo. But it is very, very important as it makes sure our bodies get rid of all the waste we accumulate through our daily lives. Isn't it wonderful to be able to just flush it all away?

Forgiveness is like that. We can come to God, covered in the filth of all the things we thought, said and done that are just plain horrid and ask to be made clean again.

RESPONDING

Inward: What weight and sin do I need to bring to God today so I can be clean and light and free to do what he wants me to do? Or use this prayer -

A Litany of Sorrow

Our insensitivity to needs of others, O Lord, forgive

Our prejudice and fear, that prevent us from loving, O Lord,
forgive

The narrowness of our vision and our shrinking from your
demands, O Lord, forgive

Our resentment against those who have hurt us, O Lord,
forgive

Our desire to do your work in our way, O Lord, forgive

Our impatience with those who are different from us, O Lord,
forgive

Our failure to listen properly to other points of view, O Lord,
forgive

Our fear of coming out of the fortress of our own souls into
fuller life and deeper love, O Lord, forgive. Amen

Upward: Wait. Receive forgiveness. Praise Him.

Outward: I may need to say sorry to somebody, or forgive
someone who has hurt me.

DAY 10, FRIDAY MEDICINE CABINET

*Then Jesus went round all the towns and villages.
He taught in their meeting places, reported kingdom news,
and healed their diseased bodies, healed their
bruised and hurt lives.*

Matthew 9:35&36

TAKE A MOMENT

Let's open our medicine cabinets or First Aid boxes and marvel at the array of tablets, cream, bandages and plasters we have. Jesus came to bring good news of God's love and also to bring real healing for body, mind and spirit.

RESPONDING

Inward: Let's spend time with God asking him to heal all the broken, bruised places of our own lives.

Upward: Let's give thanks for all involved in bringing healing, and for all the times God has brought healing to those we love.

Outward: Let's pray for all we know who are in need of healing for their body, their mental well-being or their relationships. Does anyone need to know how much the Lord loves them?

DAY 11, SATURDAY HAND CREAM

But a Samaritan, as he travelled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn and took care of him.

Luke 10:33&34

TAKE A MOMENT

Take some hand cream and rub it into your hands. Think of the difference it makes to sore, dry, cracked skin as it soothes, nourishes and heals. In the story of the Good Samaritan the unexpected helper pours oil into the man's wounds. He was the true neighbour! God calls us to go into all the world and bring healing and hope. Let's be ready to be a true neighbour whenever and wherever the opportunities arise.

RESPONDING

Outward: Rub some hand-cream onto your own hands or the hands of someone you live with.

Inward: How does it feel to be the 'anointer' as well as having the soothing relief of the ointment on your own sore places?

Upward: Thinking of the hurting people and places in our world, spend time praying for them and asking for God's loving healing.

DAY 12, SUNDAY SCENTED CANDLE

Six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, the village of Lazarus whom he had raised from the dead. They gave a supper for him there, and Martha waited on the party while Lazarus took his place at table with Jesus.

Then Mary took a whole pound of very expensive perfume and anointed Jesus' feet and then wiped them with her hair. The entire house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.

John 12:1–3

TAKE A MOMENT

Light a scented candle or an incense stick, whatever room you may be in! After a little time, go back into the room and breathe in slowly. Notice the difference the fragrance makes. Keep going back into the room through the day to recapture the hints of fragrance, the reminder of Jesus' presence.

RESPONDING

Ask Jesus, like a fragrance, to fill the room where you are with his presence. As you move throughout the day, try to recapture the fragrance in your memory. Jesus is with us wherever we are. Praise him!

DAY 13, MONDAY BANNISTER RAIL

But be very careful to keep the commandment and the law that Moses the servant of the LORD gave you: to love the LORD your God, to walk in obedience to him, to keep his commands, to hold fast to him and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul.

Joshua 22:5

TAKE A MOMENT

When you go up or down stairs or steps today, be very aware of **holding fast** (holding tightly) to the bannister rail as you go. Think about how this simple action helps you to keep your balance, stop you from tripping or falling and gives you a real sense of security.

Sometimes we may feel that following in the ways of Jesus is a bit limiting or prescriptive. We may be tempted to run ahead (like running downstairs, no matter how many times we've been told to take our time!). Holding onto Jesus steadies us, keeps us from tripping up and making mistakes or falling into sin. As we keep a firm hold of Jesus' guide let's revel in the security of being kept safe by him!

RESPONDING

Inward/Outward/Upward:

Have I let go of you, Lord, in recent days? Have I trusted myself too much and found myself tripping over my own feet, metaphorically?

I am sorry, dear Lord. Thank you for keeping me safe and secure. You're always there, waiting for me to get a grip. And as I go carefully, balanced and steadied by you, help me be there for somebody else today, to help them to regain a safe hold in life. Amen.

DAY 14, TUESDAY COAT HOOKS

The next day John was there again with two of his disciples. When he saw Jesus passing by, he said, 'Look, the Lamb of God!' When the two disciples heard him say this, they followed Jesus. Turning around, Jesus saw them following and asked, 'What do you want?' They said, 'Rabbi' (which means 'Teacher'), 'where are you staying?' 'Come,' he replied, 'and you will see.' So they went and saw where he was staying, and they spent that day with him.

John 1:35-39

TAKE A MOMENT

When we visit somebody, it's lovely to be welcomed in and asked to hang up our coats and jackets because we'll be staying a while.... long enough for a chat and a cuppa, if nothing else. We may even spend the whole day, or even overnight.

The Lord invites us into his presence daily, to take time to just be with him. And while we can talk to him and pray anywhere, at any time, it's good to just sit with him for a while. Can we get into the habit of hanging our 'jackets of busy-ness' on the peg and just take time out, to visit with Jesus, to chat and listen and rest with him a while?

RESPONDING

Inward/Upward/Outward: Let's find a quiet place to spend time with Jesus today knowing that we are totally welcome to be with him. How does it feel? Will we make a habit of this? How can we welcome others in?



DAY 15, WEDNESDAY LETTER BOX

I, John, am writing this to the seven churches in Asia province:

All the best to you from The God Who Is, The God Who Was, and The God About to Arrive, and from the Seven Spirits assembled before his throne, and from Jesus Christ—Loyal Witness, Firstborn from the dead, Ruler of all earthly kings.

The Master declares, “I’m A to Z. I’m The God Who Is, The God Who Was, and The God About to Arrive.

I’m the Sovereign-Strong.”

Verses from Revelation 1

TAKE A MOMENT

It’s exciting hearing that letter plop on the mat, or the lid of the letter-box clang. It’s especially good when we find a letter written personally to us. Certain letters will be treasured always. Birthday letters from grandparents, for instance, or love letters from our fiancé. Lots of the books in the New Testament were originally letters to church groups and we’ve kept them so we can reread them for twenty centuries!

I wonder what God would write to us as his church today? Encouragement? Comfort? Some straight-talking advice? A letter full of love?

RESPONDING

Inward: What sort of letter do you *need* to have from God? Try to notice as he speaks to you through his Word, other people, events and experiences today.

Upward: Write a heartfelt, honest letter to God.

Outward: Write to somebody who needs to hear they are remembered and loved.

DAY 16, THURSDAY CHARITY APPEAL

It is possible to give away and become richer!

It is also possible to hold on too tightly and lose everything.

Yes, the liberal man shall be rich!

By watering others, he waters himself.

Proverbs 11, 24 & 25

TAKE A MOMENT

The Bible tells us in many places that those with a generous spirit toward people in need will not go unrewarded, but those with a selfish spirit will live to regret their tight-fistedness. Let's open our eyes, our hearts and our wallets to those in need. Let's be generous and share from God's provident blessings to us. Our generosity does not have to be

limited to money: we can give in other ways such as our time, our talents, our practical help.

Another challenge: Do we only give 'off the top', leaving our giving to others when we've satisfied all our own agendas? Let's include our neighbours, our Church, the poor or misaligned in our planned and spontaneous giving.

As we support others monetarily, or with our own hands, or in prayer, let's give of our very best as if we are giving directly to God!

RESPONDING

Lord, help me honour you by putting you first whether it's with my money, my service, my time or my skills. Help me remember that you are honoured best when you and all those that suffer are not an afterthought in my life. Amen



DAY 17, FRIDAY KEYS

The book of Isaiah the prophet was handed to Jesus, and he opened it to the place where it says:

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me; he has appointed me to preach Good News to the poor; he has sent me to heal the broken-hearted and to announce that captives shall be released and the blind shall see, that the downtrodden shall be freed from their oppressors, and that God is ready to give blessings to all who come to him.”

He closed the book and handed it back to the attendant and sat down, while everyone in the synagogue gazed at him intently. Then he added, “These Scriptures came true today!”

Luke 4:17–21

TAKE A MOMENT

Isn't it frustrating when we lose or mislay our keys? Especially if we are in a rush? While Christians across the world suffer persecution and imprisonment, we are unlikely to have experienced being locked up for our faith. Yet we can be prisoners of our own fears, anxieties and burdens. We may long to be able to lay our hands on a way out from under it all: to unlock the fetters that bind us and hold us back from experiencing true freedom in our daily walk with Jesus. But

let's make no mistake: Jesus came to set the prisoners free and it's true for all of us today!

RESPONDING

Inward: Take some minutes to pray silently about the things that are chaining us up or holding us back from knowing freedom and peace in Christ.

Upward: Offer these things to God and ask that he will free us from their debilitating power.

Outward: Pray for prisoners everywhere, especially those unjustly held. Pray for Christ's gift of release for anyone we know whose daily life is a struggle because of their fears and anxieties.

DAY 18, SATURDAY DOORBELL/KNOCKER

Keep a sharp lookout! For you do not know when I will come, at evening, at midnight, early dawn or late daybreak. Don't let me find you sleeping. Watch for my return! This is my message to you and to everyone else.

Mark 13:35

TAKE A MOMENT

It's wonderful to have visitors and we are all longing for the post-restriction days when we can invite others into our homes again. Remember that feeling of waiting for somebody special to arrive? But when we don't know the day, never mind the hour, at which they'll be ringing that doorbell, our excitement naturally wanes.

Jesus warns us not to become complacent: not to let our lives become untidy and unwelcoming. Or worse: to have given up any expectation of the Lord coming at all. Let's encourage one another to keep the excitement of Jesus coming back bubbling and fizzing inside each one of us. Any day, any moment now!

RESPONDING

Pray or sing:

I want to see the Lord come again in my generation.

I want to see the Lord come again while I am alive.

I want to give my life for something that will last forever.

Oh I delight, I delight to do your will

What is on your heart?

Show me what to do.

Let me know your will and I will follow you.

Mark Altrogge © Sovereign Grace Praise

DAY 19, SUNDAY DOORMAT

People brought babies to Jesus, hoping he might touch them. When the disciples saw it, they shooed them off. Jesus called them back. "Let these children alone. Don't get between them and me. These children are the kingdom's pride and joy. Mark this: Unless you accept God's kingdom in the simplicity of a child, you'll never get in."

Luke 18:15-17

TAKE A MOMENT

Lots of things talk to us about God's kingdom. It may feel a bit simplistic, childish even, but we need to have both heart and mind open to God's teaching, as open and as curious as a child's! And today? Jesus welcomed children into his arms.

Lots of people have one of the doormats that have the word 'Welcome' written in big, friendly letters on them. Even if yours doesn't, the thought is there: the doormat is the first step into your home and your hospitality. Why not stand on your own doormat, outside your door. How do you feel? Is it cold outside and would you like to come into the warm? Are we always ready with a welcoming smile?

RESPONDING

Inward, Upward and Outward

Imagine you are a child again (if you have left childhood behind) and that Jesus has taken you in his arms onto his knee and you are leaning against his chest, protected by his arm, looking up into his laughing face. What do you want to tell him? What do you want to ask? What are the cries of your heart for yourself, for the world, for others?

Now...pray!

KITCHEN/DINING AREA

DAY 20, MONDAY TAP (Again!)

The man brought me back to the entrance to the temple, and I saw water coming out from under the threshold of the temple towards the east (the temple faced east). The water was coming down from under the south side of the temple, south of the altar. He then brought me out through the north gate and led me round the outside to the outer gate facing east, and the water was trickling from the south side. As the man went eastward with a measuring line in his hand, he measured off a thousand cubits and then led me through water that was ankle-deep. He measured off another

thousand cubits and led me through water that was knee-deep. He measured off another thousand and led me through water that was up to the waist. He measured off another thousand, but now it was a river that I could not cross, because the water had risen and was deep enough to swim in – a river that no one could cross.

Ezekiel 47:1-5

TAKE A MOMENT

Turn on the cold tap slowly and watch the flow grow from a drip to a true gushing rush and back again. Read the passage from Ezekiel several times. How often have our taps dried up completely?

God's love can seem to begin with a trickle of love, a hint of blessing. If we pay attention and notice the blessings poured out upon us in abundance, it will be like a river so deep and so wide, none can cross it.

RESPONDING

Inward/Upward/Outward: Take ten minutes to begin to make a list of all the blessings you have from the Lord. You probably won't finish the list! Praise him for his generosity and love. Be a blessing to somebody today while you keep on noticing other things to give thanks for. What a God we have!

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to the many contributors
that made this booklet possible.



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and St Briavels & Hewelsfield

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"where the river flows everything will live"